

## 3 Keys to Killer Storytelling

Ray Rhamey

“Writing” is different than “storytelling.” You can write beautiful English and sumptuous description and crisp dialogue but, as literary agent Kristen Nelson says, “I think writers assume that good writing is enough. Well, it’s not.”

Using instruction packed with examples that generate insights and sprinkled with writing exercises, the workshop delivers some of the “how-to” that the pros use for successful storytelling. It covers three factors:

**1. How to grab your reader on page one.** What does it take to get the reader to turn the first page? What is the goal your narrative *must* achieve on the first (and all subsequent) pages? You’ll learn about the benchmark/criterion you should hold every page of your story to.

**2. How to bait your hooks with tension.** What is it, exactly, that gets a reader to turn the page? You hear about “tension on every page,” but how do you create it? You’ll explore ways to create tension and how to keep it building.

**3. How to create characters readers connect with.** Story comes from characters—the decisions they make and the actions they take. We’ll cover “the gap” and how it powers stories. The strongest stories keep readers turning pages because they care about characters. You’ll gain insights into four techniques for creating irresistible and involving characters, including a good bad guy.

### Workshoppers will learn:

- How to hook readers on the first page
- Techniques for creating and building story tension
- Techniques for creating characters that engage readers

Note: I did this workshop at the San Miguel Writers’ Conference (Mexico) this February, and it worked quite well. Out of 44 evaluations, 28 5s and 12 4s were given, for an overall average of 4.5.

### Summary

Using copious examples, three writing exercises, and discussion, this workshop teaches how-to insights into and techniques for grabbing your reader on page one; holding onto your reader with tension, story questions, and conflict; and creating characters (including good bad guys) that involve readers in their stories.

### Bio

Ray Rhamey is an author, editor, and book designer who operates a book editing and design business called **Crrreative Book Editing and Design**. He designs book covers and interiors for

small and Indie publishers (fiction, memoir, and non-fiction), including ebook versions, and he edits book-length manuscripts, specializing in fiction.

He has been editing book-length fiction for eleven years. Many writers know him through his “litblog,” *Flogging the Quill*, where he critiques opening pages of fiction submitted by writers.

Ray is the author of *Mastering the Craft of Compelling Storytelling*. NYT bestselling author Tess Gerritsen says, “It’s a must-have for any novelist, and one of the most readable, entertaining books on writing out there.”

He has also Indie-published 4 novels: *The Vampire Kitty-cat Chronicles*, *We the Enemy*, *Finding Magic*, and *The Summer Boy*.

Ray has been an editor at two universities, and was a story editor for Filmation, an animation studio. His screen credits include an adaptation of *The Little Engine that Could* and 20 half-hour screenplays for animated series. Before that, Ray worked in advertising for twenty-five years as a writer and a creative director.

## **Experience**

I have taught workshops at these writers conferences:

- 2005, 2006 Writer’s Weekend, Seattle, WA
- 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012 Write on the Sound Writers Conference, Edmonds, WA
- 2007 Murder in the Grove Writers Conference, Boise, ID
- 2009 Mendocino Coast Writer’s Conference, Mendocino, CA
- 2011 Willamette Writers Association, Central Point, OR
- 2012 South Coast Writers’ Conference, Gold Beach, OR
- 2012 Wordstock Festival, Portland, OR
- 2013 Willamette Writer’s Conference
- 2012, 2013 Write on the River Writers’ Conference
- 2013, 2014 San Miguel Writers’ Conference, San Miguel, Mexico
- 2014 Idaho Writers League Conference, Idaho Falls, ID
- 2014 Writer Unboxed Unconference, Salem, MA

## **Workshops I have taught:**

- Crafting a Killer First Page
- 3 Keys to Killer Storytelling
- Killer Covers for Less than \$50
- Crafting Killer Description and Dialogue

## **Contact info:**

420 Morton St.  
Ashland, OR 97520

ray@rayhamey.com

**Websites:**

[www.crrreative.com](http://www.crrreative.com)

[www.floggingthequill.com](http://www.floggingthequill.com)

[www.rayhamey.com](http://www.rayhamey.com)